COLCHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION
REGULAR MEETING

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COLCHESTER, CT
2024 MAR 15 PM 1:56
TOWN CLERK

Tuesday, March 12, 2024
6:00 PM
William J. Johnston Middle School
Black Box Theater (Hybrid)

MINUTES

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Alexander Oliphant, Vice-Chair Christopher Rivers, Secretary Margo Gignac, Donna Antonacci, Michelle Millington, Rosemary Gignac, Stefanie Tracey-Calash

ADMINISTRATION PRESENT: Superintendent Daniel P. Sullivan, III, Assistant Superintendent Jessica L. Kuckel,

OTHERS PRESENT: Business Director Rachel Linkkila, Instructional Technology Coordinator Barbara Johnson, Bacon Academy Assistant Principal Melissa Cyr, Bacon Academy Assistant Principal Michael Mal, Colchester Elementary School Principal Judy O'Meara, Bacon Academy Student Board Member Brooke Dean, Bacon Academy Student Board Member Mariam Kasli

1. MEETING OPENING

1.1 Call to Order
Chair Alexander Oliphant called the meeting to order at 6:03 PM

1.2 Roll Call
Chair Oliphant conducted a roll call of the Board.

1.3 Pledge of Allegiance

2. RECOGNITIONS/ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

2.1 Digital Literacy Night recognitions

Superintendent Sullivan thanked the Board for all of their hard work and efforts. He presented the Board with gifts for Board of Education Appreciation Month.

Instructional Technology Coordinator Barbara Johnson recognized the staff members who contributed to the Digital Literacy Night that was held at CES on Thursday, February 15, 2024. Kimberly Hebb, Sarah Dolan-Adamec, Michele Lane, Karen Groves, Barbara Gabriel, Kelli Cauffman, Geri Dineen, Chelsea Greer, Dan Patersen, Kendra Meany and Peter Arseneault.

3. STUDENT BOARD MEMBERS REPORT

3.1 Student Board Member Report

Brooke discussed the students' SAT Prep as well as the SAT Prep that was offered to students. The Students thanked the staff who assisted with the SAT Prep classes. The BA Robotics Team had their first competition where they placed 3rd. The Class of 2025 is hosting a "Star Search" fundraiser on Wednesday, March 27, 2024.

4. *ADDITIONS/CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

4.1 New Agenda Items

Motion by: C. Rivers
To request Budget Transfer Requests be added to the agenda.
Second: M. Millington
Roll call: All in favor
Vote: Motion carried

Motion by: D. Antonacci
To suggest an addition of a second read of Policy Number 9130 & Policy Number 5118
Second: M. Millington
Roll call: All in favor
Vote: Motion carried

Motion by: D. Antonacci
To suggest removing 8.7-8.13
Second: M. Millington
Roll call: All in favor
Vote: Motion carried

Motion by: A. Oliphant
To suggest adding a discussion regarding the Healthy Food Certification
Second: M. Gignac
Roll call: All in favor
Vote: Motion carried

5. PUBLIC COMMENT

5.1 For Public Comments, Please See Bylaw on Meeting Conduct

1. M. Parsons Via zoom-Mr. Parsons thanked the Board and the Administration for the work at the Budget Workshop as well as the Capital Plan.

2. Skip Starks (In person)- Mr. Starks spoke in regards to the Athletic Complex as well as the other items on the Capital Plan.

3. Shannon Rogers (In person)- Mr. Rogers discussed the sports facilities and supporting the Athletic Complex updates.

4. Josh Bessett (In person)- Mr. Bessett informed the Board that he is the Waterford Boys Varsity Soccer Coach. He stated that he "dreads" playing in Colchester due to the condition of the fields. He stated that when they receive the athletic schedule, they have to confirm early games due to no lighting on the fields.

5. Jessica Ferrigno (In person) Ms. Ferrigno spoke regarding the Athletic Fields and schedules. She also stated that there is an urgent need for action.

6. Nicole McKenzie Via Zoom- Ms. McKenzie stated that she is in support of the facilities plan. She also mentioned that the Board should have a "back-up plan" in lieu of the grant application. She also discussed the current budget that was presented to the Board having a 4% increase.

7. J.P. Fougerouse (In person) Mr. Fougerouse, a Jr. at Bacon Academy, Varsity Soccer Team Member, discussed the safety issues on the current Bacon Academy fields. He also discussed some student injuries as a result of the fields.

8. Russ Glover (In person) Mr. Glover added to the support of the Athletic Fields.

9. A.J. O'Neil (In person) Mr. O'Neil stated that as a Jr.at Bacon Academy on the Football Team discussed the poor conditions of the fields as well as possibility of injury.

10. Ryan Williams (In person) Mr. Williams, a sophomore at Bacon Academy discussed the use of the fields at Bacon Academy.

11. Suzie Milner Via Zoom- Ms Milner spoke in support of the Capital Plan. She highlighted some of Bacon Academies successes. She urged folks to support the Capital Plan to maintain Bacon Academy.

12. Ashley Zaugg (In-person) Ms. Zaugg discussed the value a turf field can bring to the district. She also discussed the new fields being for everyone in town, not just Bacon Academy students.

13. Luke McCoy (In person) Mr. McCoy spoke in regards to the budget as well as some agenda items.

6. REPORT FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

6.1 Mr. Sullivan began by clarifying the groups as "committees" should be referred to as "work groups" as these work groups do not have decision making authority nor a budget. Superintendent Sullivan stated that he wanted to engage stakeholders to identify the areas that the district can grow. He discussed the needs for a Facility Work Group as well as the Magnet School Work group. He then introduced the Professional Culture Work Group.

Tiffany Moroch and Melissa Cyr presented the Pride and Purpose: Professional Culture work addressing the district's goal to *"Ensure all members of our school community feel valued, accepted and conntected."* The work group discussed their goals, their progress and their agenda. This work group is staff, parents and community members. The work group discussed a district wide survey that went out to all Colchester staff members. The work group discussed the feedback from the survey. The work group's next meeting will be on April 3, 2024.

M. Millington thanked the group for all of their work within the district.

Superintendent Sullivan introduced the Trust Work Group. Rebecca Tedesco and Elise Butson presented on behalf of the Trust, Image and Perception Work Group. The vision of the group is *"Create opportunities to build understanding and partnership with the community while increasing transparency"* The group identified community partnerships and increasing community facing visuals.

The Pride and Purpose: Student Life Work Group presented their goals and updates. M. Mal and R. Anderson presented the Student Life Work Group goals of *"Ensuring all members of our school community feel valued, accepted and connected."* The work group discussed future goals of reviewing parent and student survey data, peer mentoring applications, training students for peer mentoring as well as continuing the conversation on creating school and community based activities that help all students feel accepted, connected and ready to learn.

6.2 Budget Process

Superintendent Sullivan stated the Board of Education will present their budget to the Board of Finance on Wednesday, April 3, 2024. Superintendent Sullivan also clarified that updates to the Athletic Complex are not within the operational budget rather than part of the Capital Plan.

7. *APPROVAL OF MINUTES

7.1 *Board of Education Regular Meeting Minutes of February 27, 2024 (Agenda has a typo of February 27, 2023. Correction is "2024")

Motion by: C. Rivers
To approve the minutes as amended
Second: M. Millington
Roll call: All in favor
Vote: Motion carried

7.2 *Board of Education Special Meeting Minutes of February 22, 2024..

Motion by: C. Rivers
To approve the minutes
Second: M. Millington
Roll call: All in favor
Vote: Motion carried

8. PRIORITY DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

8.1 *Discussion and Possible Action on District Capital Plan

Superintendent Sullivan presented the District Capital Plan spreadsheet. C. Rivers pointed out the work the Pride and Purpose Work Group was able to do assisted with the Facilities Committee to look at the district needs.

Motion by: M. Gignac
To approve the Capital Plan with edits to the "*Cost Estimates*" column, "*Status Updates*" column, and changing the name to "*Outdoor Athletic Facilities"*
Second: M. Millington
Further Discussion: None
Roll call: All in favor
Vote: Motion carried

8.2 *Update on the 2024-2025 Budget

C. Rivers inquired about the new state guidelines for Kindergarten having an impact on the budget at CES in regards to adding an additional Kindergarten Teacher position. Colchester Elementary School Principal Judy O'Meara responded that there are currently 29 students who require an evaluation as to if they qualify to begin kindergarten this upcoming school year based on their age. The administration is trying to keep the class sizes between 16-18 however if 18-20 of those 29 students are school ready, there is a good possibility that Colchester Elementary School would require a new Kindergarten Teacher Position to accommodate. This teacher position is not currently in the budget. Evaluations will be completed by April.

C. Rivers asked to readdress the Transportation budget line item for students who attend Norwich Tech. Superintendent Sullivan clarified that the line item was readdressed after the budget workshop and the determination is that the line item can be reduced by $45,762.00.

Superintendent Sullivan then discussed the need for maintenance in the budget, in particular the painting updates. Business Director R. Linkkila clarified that the savings would be $15,219.00,

to the Capital Outlay. Business Director R. Linkkila confirmed that the savings would create a $38,931 savings to add to the Capital Outlay account.

Motion by: C. Rivers

To adopt the 2024-2025 School Year Budget including the budget changes to support summer painting, transportation changes, Capital Outlay fundings as well as the savings from the changes in Central Office Staff.

Second: R. Gignac

Further Discussion: None

Roll call: All in favor

Vote: Motion carried

8.3 *Discussion and Possible Action on Proposed Central Office Reorganization Plan and Associated Costs

The Finance Committee approved a Reorganization Plan for the Central Office. The net savings is roughly $15,000.00. Superintendent Sullivan suggested that the Board of Education retitle some of the positions within the Finance Office. The changes suggested are changing the Business Director to Director of Finance and Operations, adding an Assistant Finance Director, changing Finance Associates positions to hourly employees from salaried employees. Lastly, the Human Resources Coordinator expectations have been raised.

Motion by: C. Rivers

To accept proposed changes to the Finance Office

Second: D. Antonacci

Further Discussion: None

Roll call: All in favor

Vote: Motion carried

8.4 *Discussion Regarding State Required Educator Diversity Plan

Superintendent Sullivan discussed the State Required Educator Diversity Plan. Assistant Superintendent Kuckel presented the theory of actions, vision and suggestions for Colchester Public Schools based on the guidelines through the state of Connecticut.

Motion by: M. Gignac

To accept the State Required Educator Diversity Plan

Second: R. Gignac

Further Discussion: None

Roll call: All in favor

Vote: Motion carried

8.5 *Discussion and Possible Action on Bacon Academy Facility Evaluation

C. Rivers explained that the Facilities Committee is asking the board to approve $14,244.00 to

updates.

Motion by: M.Gignac

To allow the administration to enter within a contract with STD to analyze the condition of Bacon Academy pending verification of a check with legal counsel and on DAS

Second: S. Tracy-Calash

Roll call: All in favor

Vote: Motion carried

Motion by: C. Rivers

To approve the transfer of $14,244.00 from (Employee Related Insurance) account number 41210 to account number (Professional, Technical Services) 44330

Second: M. Gignac

Roll call: All in favor

Vote: Motion carried

8.6 *Discussion and Possible Action on Bacon Academy Outdoor Athletic Complex

C. Rivers expressed that the Facilities Committee would like to approve $25,000.00 to get an itemized summary of the Athletic Complex presentation. This summary would be compiled to be able to bring the itemized proposal to the Board of Selectmen/Board of Finance.

Motion by: M. Gignac

To authorize the administration to sign an agreement with Field Turf for $25,000.00 for design work, permitting and any other preliminary work to update the Outdoor Athletic Complex at Bacon Academy (Pending a check with legal council and /or the Department of Administrative Services)

Second: R. Gignac

Further Discussion: None

Roll call: All in favor

Vote: Motion carried

Motion by: D. Antonacci

To authorize the the transfer of $25,000.00 from (Electricity) 45622 to (Other Professional Technically Services) 44330 to cover the cost of Field Turf design work contract

Second: M. Gignac

Further Discussion: None

Roll call: All in favor

Vote: Motion carried

8.7 *Discussion and Possible Action on Second Read of Policy Number 9130 & Policy Number 5118

9130- *Development, Distribution and Maintenance of Manual of Policies, Regulations, ByLaws*

Approval of the edit to Policy 9130, removing the Communications Committee.

Motion by: M. Gignac
To approve the edit to Policy 9130
Second: C. Rivers
Further Discussion: None
Roll call: All in favor
Vote: Motion carried

5118-*Nonresident Attendance*

Approval of edits to Policy 5118 to add a residency verification each time a student transitions to another school within Colchester Public Schools.

Motion by: D. Antonacci
To approve the edit to Policy 5118
Second: C. Rivers
Further Discussion: None
Roll call: All in favor
Vote: Motion carried

8.7 *Discussion on New Educator Evaluation and Support Plan

Assistant Superintendent Kuckel presented the State of Connecticut Department of Education New Educator Evaluation and Support guidelines. The Board of Education will have one year to decide which Support Plan to adopt.

8.8 *Discussion and Possible Action on the Healthy Foods Certification

Pursuant to C.G.S. Section 10-215f, The Colchester Board of Education certifies that all food items offered for sale to students in the schools under its jurisdiction, and not exempted from the Connecticut Nutrition Standards published by the Connecticut State Department of Education, will comply with the Connecticut Nutrition Standards during the period of July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025. This certification shall include all food offered for sale to students separately from reimbursable meals at all times and from all sources, including but not limited to school stores, vending machines, school cafeterias, culinary programs, and any fundraising activities on school premises sponsored by the school or non-school organizations and groups.

Motion by: M. Gignac
To approve the Healthy Food Certification Compliance-ED-099

Further Discussion: None
Roll call: All in favor
Vote: Motion carried

FOOD EXEMPTIONS - The Colchester Board of Education will allow the sale to students of food items that do not meet the Connecticut Nutrition Standards provided that the following conditions are met: 1) the sale is in connection with an event occurring after the end of the regular school day or on the weekend; 2) the sale is at the location of the event; and 3) the food items are not sold from a vending machine or school store. An "event" is an occurrence that involves more than just a regularly scheduled practice, meeting, or extracurricular activity. For example, soccer games, school plays, and interscholastic debates are events but soccer practices, play rehearsals, and debate team meetings are not. The "regular school day" is the period from midnight before to 30 minutes after the end of the official school day. "Location" means where the event is being held and must be the same place as the food sales.

Motion by: M. Gignac
To approve the Healthy Food Certification Compliance-ED-099 *(FOOD EXEMPTIONS)*
Second: C. Rivers
Further Discussion: None
Roll call: All in favor
Vote: Motion carried

BEVERAGE EXEMPTIONS: The Colchester Board of Education will allow the sale to students of beverages not listed in Section 10-22Lq of the Connecticut General Statutes provided that the following conditions are met: 1) the sale is in connection with an event occurring after the end ofthe regular school day or on the weekend; 2) the sale is at the location of the event; and 3) The beverages are not sold from a vending machine or school store. An "event" is an occurrence that involves more than just a regularly scheduled practice, meeting, or extracurricular activity. The "school day" is the period from midnight before to 30 minutes after the end of the official school day. "Location" means where the event is being held and must be the same place as the beverage sales.

Motion by: C. Rivers
To approve the Healthy Food Certification Compliance-ED-099 *(BEVERAGE EXEMPTIONS)*
Second: M. Gignac
Further Discussion: None
Roll call: All in favor
Vote: Motion carried

9. REPORTS FROM BOARD COMMITTEES

9.1 Budget Finance Committee-

Transfering $25,075.00 from employee insurance to implementation and maintenance of the all hazard plan

Motion by: M. Millington

To approve the transfer of $25,075.00 from the savings of vacant positions employee insurance to cover the all hazard plan

Second: D. Antonacci

Further Discussion: None

Roll call: All in favor

Vote: Motion carried

WJJMS Bond Update-R. Linkkila discussed the state has sent two progress payments in the amounts of $317,142.00 and $292,935.00. There are more funds to be released once the audit from the State is complete. Ms. Linkkila shared that the state has all of the required documents.

9.2 Curriculum Committee-

No Report

9.3 Facilities Committee-

C. Rivers confirmed that the HVAC grant is being evaluated currently.

9.4 Policy Committee-

D. Antonacci stated the committee has completed work on the 9000 series. They will have a first read during the next meeting.

10. BOARD ANNOUNCEMENTS AND INFORMATION ITEMS

9.1 Next Meetings

The next BOE regular meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 16, 2024.

9.2 Personnel Report

8 New hires and 6 resignations/retirements

9.3 Notices of Retirements/Resignations

V. Wolk, J. Holcomb, M. Hartley, G. Leyland were listed as resignations.

11. PUBLIC COMMENTS